AJTs for IAF

*368. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have plans to acquire Advanced Jet Trainer aircrafts for the use of Indian Air Force ;

(b) if so, the details of the requirements and the offers received from various sources, including costs involved and merits of the aircrafts; and

(c) the details of the existing position of the Trainer Aircrafts ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government have approved procurement of 66 AJT aircraft for the Indian Air Force. After evaluation of various trainer aircraft available in the world market, the Air Force has short-listed the French Alpha Jet and British Hawk. Commercial negotiations with the vendors are yet to commence and therefore, cost details are not available presently.

(c) The Mig-21 trainer aircraft presently used for stage-III training of IAF pilots are approaching the end of their technical life. The strength of these aircraft is expected to decrease over the coming years. This aspect has been taken into consideration in procurement of AJT.

Investigation of Shivani Murder Case

*369. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the CBI/Delhi Police is investigating the murder case of Delhi based journalist, Shivani;

(b) if so, whether the investigation report has since been submitted;

(c) what are the details of investigation including interrogation of Central Ministers in the case as demanded by husband of Shivani;

(d) what action has taken on the basis of investigation report ; and

(e) if answer to part (b) above is negative, the time by when investigation is likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) Yes, Sir. The investigation into "Shivani Bhatnagar murder case" has been assigned to the Crime Branch of Delhi Police.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) The case is still under investigation and Delhi Police is of the view that it is not in the interest of investigation to disclose any details at this stage. However, Delhi Police have denied that there has been any demand from the husband of the deceased to question any Union Minister in connection with the murder of his wife. Delhi Police have further reported that the investigation carried out so far has also not revealed any material to suggest any involvement of a Union Minister.

(e) The investigation into this case is being conducted with all vigour and under close supervision of senior police officers. However, it is difficult to indicate a time frame for the completion of the investigation.

Privatisation of Civic Services

*370. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are preparing a plan to privatise water supply, sanitation and sewer services on a mass scale ;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor ;

(c) by when the plan is likely to be executed ;

(d) whether the private agencies entrusted with these functions would be subjected to the supervision of a Statutory Regulatory Authority to be set up for the purpose ; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA) : (a) to (e) : As far as rural drinking water supply, sanitation and sewerage services are concerned, no proposal of privatisation is under consideration of the Government at present.

As far as urban water supply, sanitation and sewerage services are concerned, the Constitution has extended the responsibility of providing water supply and sanitation in urban areas to the State Governments. It is for the State Government to take a decision regarding privatisation of these services.